

## PROGRESS MADE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF WPTT24

PREPARED BY: IOTC SECRETARIAT, 18 MAY 2023

### PURPOSE

To provide participants at the 25<sup>th</sup> WPTT(DP) with an update on the progress made in implementing those recommendations from the previous Working Party on Tropical Tunas (WPTT) meeting which were endorsed by the Scientific Committee (SC), and to provide alternative recommendations for the consideration and potential endorsement by participants as appropriate given any progress.

### BACKGROUND

At the 24<sup>th</sup> Session of the WPTT, participants agreed on a series of actions to be taken by participants, CPCs, and the IOTC Secretariat on a range of issues. The subsequent table developed and agreed to by the WPTT was provided to the SC for its endorsement at its December 2021 meeting.

### DISCUSSION

The Rules of Procedure of the Scientific Committee include the following seven core tasks, which are to be supported by the various Working Parties.

- a) recommend policies and procedures for the collection, processing, dissemination and analysis of fishery data;
- b) facilitate the exchange and critical review among scientists of information on research and operation of fisheries of relevance to the Commission;
- c) develop and coordinate cooperative research programmes involving Members of the Commission in support of fisheries management;
- d) assess and report to the Commission on the status of stocks of relevance to the Commission and the likely effects of further fishing and of different fishing patterns and intensities;
- e) formulate and report to the sub-commission, as appropriate, on recommendations concerning conservation, fisheries management and research, including consensus, majority and minority views;
- f) consider any matter referred to by the Commission;
- g) carry out other technical activities of relevance to the Commission.

Recalling that the SC, at its 16<sup>th</sup> Session adopted a set of reporting terminology SC16.07 (para. 23), which was subsequently endorsed by the Commission at its 18<sup>th</sup> Session in 2014 (S18, para 10), to further improve the clarity of information sharing from, and among the science bodies, the following two term levels should be noted when interpreting the Reports and [Appendix I](#) to this paper:

**Level 1:** From a subsidiary body of the Commission to the next level in the structure of the Commission:

**RECOMMENDED, RECOMMENDATION:** Any conclusion or request for an action to be undertaken, from a subsidiary body of the Commission (Committee or Working Party), which is to be formally provided to the next level in the structure of the Commission for its consideration/endorsement (e.g. from a Working Party to the Scientific Committee; from a Committee to the Commission). The intention is that the higher body will consider the recommended action for endorsement under its own mandate, if the subsidiary body does not already have the required mandate. Ideally this should be task specific and contain a timeframe for completion.

**Level 2:** From a subsidiary body of the Commission to a CPC, the IOTC Secretariat, or other body (not the Commission) to carry out a specified task:

**REQUESTED:** This term should only be used by a subsidiary body of the Commission if it does not wish to have the request formally adopted/endorsed by the next level in the structure of the Commission. For example, if a Committee

wishes to seek additional input from a CPC on a particular topic, but does not wish to formalise the request beyond the mandate of the Committee, it may request that a set action be undertaken. Ideally this should be task specific and contain a timeframe for the completion.

In addition to the Recommendations endorsed by the SC at its 24<sup>th</sup> Session, the SC also made several requests which, although are not passed to the Commission for its endorsement, are considered actions which the Scientific Committee has the mandate to issue. The revised recommendations are contained in [Appendix I](#) for the consideration and potential endorsement by the WPTT24(DP).

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the WPTT:

- 1) **NOTE** paper IOTC–2023–WPTT25(DP)–06 which detailed the progress made in implementing the recommendations of the WPTT24, and the requests of the 25<sup>th</sup> Session of the Scientific Committee (SC25), taking into consideration the recommendations from the SC and decisions of the Commission;
- 2) **AGREE** to consider and revise as necessary, the recommendations, and for these to be combined with any new recommendations arising from the WPTT25(DP), noting that these will be provided to the SC for its endorsement.

#### **APPENDICES**

**Appendix I:** Progress made on the Recommendations and Requests of WPTT24

## APPENDIX I

## Progress made on the recommendations of WPTT24

WPTT23 Rec. No.		SC25 Rec. No.	Recommendation adopted by the SC25
WPTT24.01 (para 74)	<p><b><i>Bigeye Tuna Management Procedure</i></b></p> <p>The WPTT <b>NOTED</b> that the authors also presented the key data inputs to the MP and the calculation of the TAC. The WPTT <b>NOTED</b> that the application of the bigeye management procedure resulted in a recommended TAC of 80,583t per year for 2024 and 2025; which requires a 15% catch reduction from the 2021 catch level. The WPTT <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that the SC endorse the TAC advice from the MP.</p>	SC25.18 (paras. 98)	<p><b><i>Bigeye Tuna MP</i></b></p> <p>The SC <b>NOTED</b> that the application of the bigeye management procedure resulted in a recommended TAC of 80,583 t per year for 2024 and 2025, which requires a 15% catch reduction from the 2021 catch level. The SC <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that the Commission endorse the calculated TAC for 2024 and 2025.</p>
WPTT24.02 (para. 75)	<p>The WPTT also <b>NOTED</b> that the paper reviewed evidence for exceptional circumstances as per Resolution 22/03. The review covered information pertaining to i) new knowledge about the stock, population dynamics or biology, ii) changes in fisheries or fisheries operations, iii) changes to input data or missing data, and iv) inconsistent implementation of the MP advice. The WPTT <b>NOTED</b> that bigeye stock assessment in 2022 did not provide any new or conflicting information about population trends or stock status and that changes in the data used in the CPUE standardisation, a new growth curve and an alternative natural mortality scenario used in the 2022 stock assessment models were not considered as exceptional circumstances that require changes in the recommended TAC. The WPTT <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that based on the review of evidence for exceptional circumstances, the SC should endorse the finding that no reasons to change the advice on TAC were identified.</p>	Para (100)	<p>The SC <b>NOTED</b> the consideration of exceptional circumstances for the Bigeye Tuna MP in 2022 were discussed extensively at WPM8 and WPTT24 and evidence reviewed included new biological parameters and fishery operations, input data, and a comparison of the estimated population trend in the assessment with operating models. The SC <b>AGREED</b> that the review of evidence for exceptional circumstances did not identify any reasons to change the advice on the TAC.</p>
WPTT24.03 (para. 77)	<p>Given the lack of effective catch limits implementation in the IOTC in the past, the WPTT strongly <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that the SC advise the Commission to ensure effective implementation of the bigeye management procedure recommended TAC.</p>	SC25.19 (para. 99)	<p>Given average catch of BET in the past 5 years being above the calculated TAC for 2024 and 2025 and the lack of effective implementation of catch limits for other stocks in the IOTC, the SC <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that the Commission ensure effective implementation of the bigeye management procedure recommended TAC, especially taking into consideration the current overfished and subject to overfishing status of the stock. The SC <b>NOTED</b> that respecting the BET TAC is especially important when taking into consideration the multi-species nature of the Tropical tuna fisheries and especially taking into account the existing catch limit for YFT and TAC for SKJ.</p>
WPTT24.04 (para. 109):	<p><b><i>Revision of the WPTT Program of Work (2023–2027)</i></b></p> <p>The WPTT <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that the SC consider and endorse the WPTT Program of Work (2023–2027), as provided in Appendix VII.</p>	(para 179)	<p><b><i>Program of Work (2023–2027) and assessment schedule</i></b></p> <p>The SC <b>NOTED</b> IOTC–2022–SC25–08 which provided the SC with a proposed Program of Work for each of its working parties, including prioritisation of the elements requested by each working party.</p>

WPTT23 Rec. No.		SC25 Rec. No.	Recommendation adopted by the SC25
			The SC <b>NOTED</b> the proposed Program of Work and priorities for the SC and each of the working parties and <b>AGREED</b> to a consolidated Program of Work as outlined in Appendix 35a-g and in accordance with the IOTC Strategic Science Plan 2020-2024. The Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of each working party will ensure that the efforts of their respective working parties are focused on the core areas contained within the appendix, taking into account any new research priorities identified by the Commission at its next Session
WPTT24.05 (para 112)	<b>Date and place of the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> Sessions of the WPTT</b> The WPTT <b>NOTED</b> that the global Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in international travel being almost impossible and with no clear end to the pandemic in sight, it was impossible to finalise arrangements for the meeting in 2022. The Secretariat will continue to liaise with CPCs to determine their interest in hosting these meetings in the future as the SC is encouraging a return to physical meetings in 2023. The WPTT <b>RECOMMENDED</b> the SC consider late October 2023 as a preferred time period to hold the WPTT24 meeting in 2023..	(para 190)	The SC <b>REQUESTED</b> that the schedule of Working Party and Scientific Committee meetings for 2023 and 2024 provided at Appendix 37 be communicated by the IOTC SC Chairperson to the Commission for its endorsement.
WPTT24.06 (para. 114)	<b>Review of the draft, and adoption of the Report of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the WPTT</b> The WPTT <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that the Scientific Committee consider the consolidated set of recommendations arising from WPTT24, provided at Appendix VIII, as well as the management advice provided in the draft resource stock status summary for each of the three tropical tuna species under the IOTC mandate, and the combined Kobe plot for the three species assigned a stock status in 2021 (Figure 1): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Bigeye tuna (<i>Thunnus obesus</i>) – Appendix IV</li><li>○ Skipjack tuna (<i>Katsuwonus pelamis</i>) – Appendix V</li><li>○ Yellowfin tuna (<i>Thunnus albacares</i>) – Appendix VI</li></ul>	SC25.01 (para. 159)	<b>Tuna – Highly migratory species</b> The SC <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that the Commission note the management advice developed for each tropical and temperate tuna species as provided in the Executive Summary for each species, and the combined Kobe plot for the four species assigned a stock status in 2022 (Fig. 1): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Albacore (<i>Thunnus alalunga</i>) – Appendix 8</li><li>○ Bigeye tuna (<i>Thunnus obesus</i>) – Appendix 9</li><li>○ Skipjack tuna (<i>Katsuwonus pelamis</i>) – Appendix 10</li><li>○ Yellowfin tuna (<i>Thunnus albacares</i>) – Appendix 11</li></ul>

WPTT24 Report	WPTT23 REQUESTS	Update/Progress
Para. 15	<b>Data available at the Secretariat</b> For this reason, the WPTT <b>REQUESTED</b> Pakistan to take all necessary steps to share geo-referenced catch-and-effort data with the Secretariat and <b>AGREED</b> that concerned CPCs should work in collaboration with the IOTC to further clarify the double-counting issue and report back to the WPTT in the future.	<b>Update:</b> Ongoing. The Secretariat is liaising with CPCs to provide this information.

Para. 17	The WPTT <b>ACKNOWLEDGED</b> that while sampling strategies might be similar between the EU and these “assimilated” fleets, the fishing effort locations do indeed vary consistently with the fleet and therefore <b>REQUESTED</b> that the current nomenclature be updated to further reflect this situation.	<b>Update:</b> The nomenclature has been updated in all documents, where required.
Para. 22	The WPTT <b>THANKED</b> the IOTC Secretariat for this draft proposal of a set of fisheries indicators and <b>REQUESTED</b> that these be routinely presented at the next sessions of the meeting and further extended as soon as new information becomes available.	<b>Update:</b> Ongoing. The Secretariat will routinely present this information.
Para 70	<p><b><i>Selection of Stock Status Indicators for bigeye tuna</i></b></p> <p>The WPTT <b>ADOPTED</b> the stock status advice developed for bigeye tuna as provided in the draft resource stock status summary and <b>REQUESTED</b> that the IOTC Secretariat update the draft stock status summary for bigeye tuna with the latest 2021 catch data (if necessary), and for the summary to be provided to the SC as part of the draft Executive Summary, for its consideration:</p>	<b>Update:</b> Completed.
Para 108	<p><b><i>Revision of the WPTT Program of Work (2023–2027)</i></b></p> <p>The WPTT <b>REQUESTED</b> that the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the WPTT, in consultation with the IOTC Secretariat, develop Terms of Reference (TOR) for each of the high priority projects that are yet to be funded, for circulation to potential funding sources.</p>	<b>Update:</b> Completed and included in the report of the SC25.